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Captive Nations Cause

A Hot Campaign Issue Ready To Be Picked Up

By Roscoe Drummond

WASHINGTON.

Another significant foreign policy campaign issue may be in the making: What is the United States going to do about freeing the Soviet-dominated captive nations of Eastern Europe?

The Republican platform, written to Sen. Goldwater's prescription, is weak on this point. It relies more on nice-sounding words than concrete actions. The GOP reaffirms its "long-standing commitment to a course leading to eventual liberation."

Thus President Johnson and the Democrats have the opportunity to pick up this issue and write some specifics into their platform.

So far only one avowed difference has appeared in the foreign policy statements of the two candidates. This is over whether the decision to use all kinds of nuclear weapons should be kept exclusively in the hands of the President or whether the use of tactical nuclear weapons should be delegated to the NATO commander.

Sen. Goldwater has warned that, if the Administration fails to show that it is prosecuting the defense of South Viet Nam vigorously, Viet Nam will be an issue. It has not become one so far.

It is the vagueness of the Republican opposition on Eastern Europe which caused Christopher Emmett, chairman of the American Friends of the Captive Nations, a bipartisan committee of leading officials and citizens, to render this blunt judgment on the GOP platform:

"Though it seems good enough at first glance, it is really just another expression of sympathy and pious intent, designed to appeal to the largest number of nationality group voters."

There are two main reasons why those who want to see the U. S. take prudent but more positive measures toward restoring the freedom of the Eastern European peoples feel let down by the

One is that, apart from taking a skeptical attitude toward trade with the Communist countries, the Republican platform makes no specific pledges of action.

The other is that Sen. Goldwater has now promised that he will follow "the basic Eisenhower-Dulles foreign policies." One of the Eisenhower policies was to step back from exploiting the weaknesses, divisions, and revolts in the East European satellites—as in East Germany, Hungary, and Poland.

Possibly Sen. Goldwater will go beyond the piousness

of his platform, as Presidential nominees have done in the past. That remains to be seen.

Meanwhile, it is open to Johnson to seize the initiative from his opposition—if he is prepared to do so.

When the Friends of the Captive Nations in Eastern Europe talk about "specific actions," they are not talking about going to war and particularly they are not talking about going to war with the Soviet Union over the Ukraine. (The Republicans included the Ukraine in their list of captive nations, though it has been a part of Russia longer than Arizona has been in the Union.)

They are talking about such actions as these:

1. Expelling the Hungarian Kadar regime delegates from the UN, whose resolutions they have defied.

2. Demanding that the UN debate and investigate Soviet colonialism as well as colonialism in Africa.

3. Placing East Europe as well as German unification on the agenda of all high level East-West negotiations.

4. Granting trade or aid to Communist governments only in return for political concessions.

"The Soviet bloc economy," says Mr. Emmett in a statement to both parties, "is harder pressed than at any time since World War II. Khrushchev and his satellites now desperately need our trade and credits. Thus we have a corresponding bargaining power, if we would only use it. The Communists use trade as a weapon of subversion; the free world should use it as a weapon to defend freedom."

It will be revealing to see how the Democrats handle this issue at Atlantic City. They have the opportunity to make an issue—and, I think, a sound one—or throw it away.

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